some idea of a god, but it is also a fact, explain it as we please, that all nations have fallen into the most unworthy conceptions of his nature and connexion with the human race. We believe the second of these facts to be the natural result of man's character, as much as the other. False religions, appearing in every age and nation, have assumed forms as varied as the tastes and prejudices, as the habits and manners of mankind, or as the climates in which they lived, but all tending to darken and degrade the purity of the Divine nature.

Man must have a god; but he forms his own god, and he makes it a god after his own image. Instead of forming his own character after the likeness of God, he would fashion a god after his own likeness. It appears that at a very early age in the history of the world, there was a tendency to carnalize the Divine character by representing it in symbol;—in brute symbol, as among the ancient Egyptians; in the more glorious of the inanimate works of God, as among the Persians; and in images of man's own construction, as among the majority of nations. The very beauty of the works of God stole away men's minds from the author, and they lifted up an eye, first of reverence, and then of worship, to the sun and moon and host of heaven, considered by the philosophers as emanations of Deity, and by the multitude as the deities themselves. Others were more impressed with the heroic and the ancient, and deified the heroes of bygone ages, the renowned warriors of their country, the promoters of the arts and sciences. So strong was this desire to bring down celestial things to the level of terrestrial things, that in the Egyptian mythology heaven was merely a celestial Egypt, watered by a celestial Nile, lightened by a celestial sun, and divided into the same number of nomes as the earthly country, and each of these the peculiar residence of the

god worshipped in the corresponding district of the terrestrial Egypt Error, as it advanced, grew in waywardness and strength, till, in the ages of Homer and Hesiod, the prevailing religions of Europe became completely anthropomorphic; and Mars was just the embodiment of the popular admiration of warlike achievement, and Venus that of the popular conception of love. So complete at length did «this adaptation to human nature become, that thieves have had their patron god in Mercury, and the Thugs divinities pleased \vith the murders which they committed*